NASA Honors its Space Science Student Competition Winners

Twenty-seven students from public and private schools across the US have won national recognition in NASA's 17th annual Space Science Student Involvement Program competition. The students were honored, along with their teachers, at the National Space Science Symposium, May 3-7, in Washington, DC. The competition, co-sponsored by NASA and the National Science Teachers Association, is an interdisciplinary program designed to address the need for greater literacy in the areas of science, critical and creative thinking, mathematics, and technology. Over 10,000 students in elementary, junior high, and high school competed in five competition categories using their skills in mathematics, science, technology, art and creative writing.

The symposium

The National Space Science Symposium brings together the 27 national winners and their teachers to recognize their academic achievement in an environment designed to further challenge their talents. The trip to the symposium includes formal presentations of their entries by the students.

In addition to their recognition in Washington, other awards include opportunities to intern at a NASA field center for a week during the summer, Space Camp scholarships, medals, ribbons, and certificates. Winners of the Interplanetary Art competition had their artwork displayed at the Marriott Metro Center Hotel during the symposium. Following the symposium, the artwork went on display in museums, schools, and other public sites and can be viewed by the public throughout this year.

The competitions

The symposium sponsors competitions in experiment/design and internships. The experiment competitions encompassed Mars science, interplanetary art, aircraft/spacecraft design, and Mission to Planet Earth. The internship competition offered aerospace, supercomputer, and space station interns.

- Mars Science Experiment - students in grades 9 -12 planned and developed a trip to Mars and proposed an experiment to be conducted along the way. Students were required to follow scientific research guidelines when designing the study.
- Interplanetary Art - students in grades 3 - 12 created two-dimensional illustrations of interplanetary space, accompanied by essays describing the pictures.
- Future Aircraft/Spacecraft Design - students in grades 3 - 5 worked in teams to design futuristic aircraft or spacecraft, with illustrations and essays describing the spacecraft.
- Mission To Planet Earth - students in grades 6 - 8, worked in teams to create interdisciplinary projects using satellites to study the effects of human activity on the Earth's ecosystem.

The students competed for internships with their teachers/advisors at NASA facilities and were chosen on the basis of a written proposals. The winners were granted aerospace, supercomputer, and space station Internships.

OUTREACH

The goal of NASA's many outreach programs is to promote to the general public an understanding of how NASA makes significant contributions to American education systems and to institutions dedicated to improving science literacy. This newsletter provides one vehicle for reporting how applications and hardware used for space science and other NASA research and development can be adapted for use by teachers and their students and by non-NASA organizations.